

Headline **Mercy killers will not escape justice: Prosecution**
Date **26 Feb 2010**
MediaTitle **Borneo Post (Kuching)**
Section **World**
Journalist **N/A**
Frequency **Daily (EM)**
Circ / Read **57,529 / 166,173**

Language
Page No
Article Size
Color
ADValue
PRValue

English
A5
60 cm²
Black/white
345
1,036



Mercy killers will not escape justice: Prosecution

LONDON: Mercy killers in England will face the full force of the law under new guidelines on assisted suicide, the head of the country's prosecution service said in comments published yesterday.

But those who respond to a request from a loved one to help in their suicide are unlikely to face prosecution, Keir Starmer wrote in the Times newspaper, trailing new guidance he will unveil later in the day.

"Assisted suicide involves assisting the victim to take his or her own life," wrote Starmer, the Director of Public Prosecutions for England and Wales.

"Someone who takes the life of another undertakes a very different act and may well be liable to a charge of murder or manslaughter.

"That distinction is an important one which we all need to understand."

A decision on prosecution would also depend on the motivation of the person who helped someone to die, he indicated.

"Whether the suspect was wholly motivated by compassion was seen by many as a key factor when considering prosecution," he said.

Assisted suicide has been at the centre of fierce debate here after a string of recent high-profile cases.

Last week, a veteran BBC broadcaster was arrested on suspicion of murder after admitting in a television programme about assisted suicide that he had smothered an ex-lover who had AIDS. — AFP